

I would like to remind my colleagues that America didn't build the world's greatest economy by closing our doors, crossing our fingers, and doing one another's laundry. We did it by welcoming the workers of the world, by offering them a home where they can earn an honest living, pay their fair share, and secure a brighter future for their children.

Many people say: Well, we want to get those Ph.D.s from India, China, and Asia. We want them living here. They are going to be good for our economy, and they are going to create businesses.

That is all true. I stand behind that as well. But there are also many workers who don't have that level of education but have a determination and a work ethic that have always been part of success in the American economy.

This unique American promise, build a brighter future for their children as well as ours, is the bedrock of our Nation. No other country in the world can deprive us of it. We can only deprive ourselves by refusing to fix a broken immigration system that leaves millions of hard-working families in the shadows of our society. If we want to continue leading in the 21st century, if we want America to be in first place and not second place, we need to keep the American promise alive, and we need to do it by passing the Farm Workforce Modernization Act, joining together in support of comprehensive immigration reform.

Madam President, the issue of immigration, as you probably know, is a point of passion of mine. I know it is one of yours. You mentioned to me the other day in passing that you are the only true immigrant in the Senate, and it is, I guess, historic that I would give this speech and you would be presiding over the Senate as I do. I am sure you feel as I do. These people go to work every single day. They do the dirtiest, hardest, most dangerous work in America, and they do it without any hope of a great future because they are undocumented. They have no future. The person they are working for this week may decide on Friday night not to pay them anything. Are they going to go to court to fight for their rights as workers? Probably not. They don't feel they have any rights because they are undocumented.

But a good thing happened here years ago when a coalition of Senators, Democrats and Republicans, put together a farm worker provision. Now the House has done it for us again. They have led the way with the Farm Workforce Modernization Act and passed it and sent it here. It is time for us to take up this measure.

I have talked to a number of our Republican friends, and many of them are from agricultural States. They understand it, and they support it. They want to be a part of it. You would be surprised if I told you their names on the floor, but I am careful not to. They are worried because this issue of immi-

gration is controversial. But they understand the fairness of it all.

I want to salute MICHAEL BENNET, the Senator from Colorado, who has been a leader on this subject from the start. Years ago, we had a coalition effort, the Gang of 8 effort. He was the person who put together the farm worker provision. I think DIANNE FEINSTEIN was a great contributor in that effort as well.

MICHAEL BENNET is back again working for this bill. We ought to take this up. We ought to do it this week. We ought to pass it out of the Senate, the bill that passed the House, and, in so doing, we would be doing a favor for essential workers—some of the lowest paid, hardest working people in America. It is only right, and I hope we do it soon.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, I spoke recently about a serious crisis facing our economy, the workforce shortage. This has been brought on by many things that my colleagues from the left have spent and asked questions and brought about policies.

Today, I want to discuss another looming challenge to our economy, one where Democratic policies are adding fuel to the fire, if not starting the fire itself. I am talking about inflation.

Inflation is not an abstract idea thrown around by finance gurus. Inflation is a real threat to the pocketbooks of hard-working Americans throughout our great country. We haven't hit the inflation levels of Jimmy Carter's days yet, but the warning signs are here.

I recently spoke with a group of homebuilders from across my home State of Alabama. They told me how they are seeing prices increase that are even higher than the ballooning national average. As an example, in Alabama and across much of the South, homebuilding materials, such as brick, are up 10 percent. Insulation prices are up 15 percent. Sheetrock prices are up nearly 50 percent. Lumber prices are up 300 percent. And particle board prices, which are used in most homes across the country, the price is up almost 600 percent.

Although demand for houses went up during the height of the pandemic, the Commerce Department reported that U.S. homebuilding actually declined in April of this year. With the demand for housing so high right now, you would think new construction would be taking place everywhere you turn, but that is not the case. Builders are actually delaying construction projects because material prices have hit record

highs. Prices are rising so rapidly that a project costing \$300,000 at the beginning ends up costing more than \$350,000 at the time of completion. This eats into builders' margins and discourages them from starting new projects, therefore, putting people out of work.

Folks back home can rest assured that I will be monitoring this closely. I will be listening to my constituents and other companies about their costs and supply chain experiences. But I shouldn't be the only one taking all these concerns into account. These price jumps should be concerning to all of us in this building because the national numbers don't paint a rosy picture.

In April, consumer prices jumped by 4.2 percent, the highest rise in over a decade. Energy prices went up 25 percent overall, with gas prices increasing nearly 50 percent. According to the Philadelphia Federal Reserve, price increases by one metric were the highest since 1980.

This level of inflation doesn't just affect a select few; it affects all American families. For many folks, a 4-percent hike on grocery bills takes a serious toll. Rising prices like these are the definition of a kitchen table issue. Paying 50 percent more for gas or having a costlier electric bill forces families to make a hard choice on what they can and cannot afford for that month.

We must get our fiscal house in order before inflation gets totally out of control and reverses the economic progress we made under President Trump's leadership.

You know there are different ways to combat inflation—a lot of different ways—but we know what makes inflation worse: massive government spending, and that is exactly what we are getting as we speak.

President Biden and congressional Democrats spent \$1.9 trillion on a stimulus bill that flooded the economy with cash just 2 months ago. Think about that—1.9 trillion. Now we want to spend trillions on a package in disguise of an infrastructure bill. And they are following this up by trillions more to fund items on the progressive priority list in the future.

Well, they are being confronted by the old truth: There is no such thing as a free lunch. Simple economics show that when the supply of something goes up, the value goes down. Money is no different.

President Biden's policies are pumping our economy with money we simply don't have to spend, and that is the definition of inflation: making money lose its value. It is the natural result of the policies that we passed in this Chamber in the last few months.

That is why Larry Summers, a former Treasury Secretary and adviser to Presidents Clinton and Obama, warned that the Biden stimulus would be "the least responsible macroeconomic policy we've had in the last 40 years." Remember, he worked for

two Democratic Presidents. I couldn't agree more with Mr. Summers.

Democrats learned the wrong lesson from the financial crisis in 2008. They thought the recovery was slow because the government spent too little. They have been determined to spend much more this time around. The economic recovery from the pandemic was already well underway when the Democrats passed their massive stimulus in March—\$1.9 trillion.

Thanks to the bipartisan emergency relief bills passed under President Trump, the economy had stabilized by yearend. We were in the middle of the most rapid economic recovery on record, but the Democrats' out-of-control spending is putting the recovery at risk, and it is the American families who will pay the price in the end.

In addition to a reckless monetary policy, they want to raise taxes on all of us, including small businesses and family farms, to fund this spending spree. They want to undo the Tax and Jobs Cuts Act passed by the Senate Republicans and signed into law by President Trump.

These Republican tax cuts helped create the best economy in a generation. They created countless opportunities for hard-working Americans. Unemployment was at historic lows. Blue-collar wages rose faster than white-collar wages for the first time in history.

If they repeal the Republican tax cuts, Democrats will be encouraging American companies to move overseas. Job creators will have to pay more taxes at the same time as they are recovering from the pandemic, and the tax increases being proposed will be passed on to working Americans in the form of higher prices and lower wages.

In fact, the only people Democrats want to lower taxes for are the people who are high earners in New York, California, and New Jersey. Higher taxes, combined with the Democrats' inflation, would be a one-two knockout punch of our Nation's economic recovery.

It only takes one match to start a brush fire. Rather than taking commonsense steps to fight inflation, Democrats are preparing for it by dumping lighter fluid on the entire field. President Biden styles himself as the second coming of FDR, but he is looking more like Jimmy Carter every day.

Americans my age will remember Carter's Presidency and how tough those times were for working families. I hope we can avoid repeating history, but that means we need to take action, and we need to take action now. I urge my Democratic colleagues to reexamine their misplaced priorities and keep pro-worker tax and spending policies in place.

Let's work together on practical ways to get our economy and our country back to work.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, during the first 4 months of 2021, more than half a million migrants have crossed our southern border—a half a million—including more than 50,000 unaccompanied children. Now, nobody really believes that those children got there all by themselves. The truth is, they have been smuggled to the border and crossed the border only to be picked up by Border Patrol, taken care of, as we would all hope they would be, and ultimately be placed with U.S. sponsors. I will have more to say about that in a moment.

In the same period of time last year, there were fewer than 125 migrants who crossed our border, including just over 10,000 children—half a million so far this year, 125,000 last year, 50,000 children so far this year, 10,000 last year during the same period of time. Put simply, this is not normal, nor should it be the standard operating procedure for the U.S. Government. The truth is, our country lacks the facilities, the personnel, the resources, and the policies to handle this sort of influx of humanity in a humane way.

Back in March, the President tapped Vice President HARRIS to handle the border crisis, but we have seen no progress to date. In fact, the Vice President, I believe, is in Guatemala today, and she hasn't even been to our southern border. She hasn't visited the facilities where tens of thousands of migrant children have been cared for. And she hasn't listened to the migrants' horrifying stories of how they were treated by the human smugglers that brought them to the border.

We do know the Vice President is finally hitting the trail this week to talk about the border crisis. But that seems to be all it is, is talk. The only problem is, she is not visiting the border. She is not even in her home State of California, which has a border with Mexico. She is in Guatemala.

As law enforcement, nongovernmental organizations, and border communities are being overwhelmed by the surge of migration, the Vice President is meeting with foreign leaders. Now, there is nothing inherently wrong about meeting with foreign leaders, but, surely, she can't think that a conversation with the President of Guatemala is going to solve the human crisis at our border.

The Border Patrol will tell you, as they have told me, mass migration like this is a product of two different actions. One is the so-called push factors, which means people who lack economic opportunity; maybe they are fleeing violence; maybe they just want to come to America to be reunited with some other relatives; and certainly the

human smugglers are more than happy at \$5,000, and more, a head to help them. But these smugglers, as I intimated a moment ago, are a part of transnational criminal organizations that care nothing for these migrants. They just care about the money. And what they do is they flood the border with unaccompanied children, for example, taking as many as 40 percent of the Border Patrol off the frontlines in the war against illegal drugs coming across the border. And when the Border Patrol is not there—surprise, surprise—the very drugs that contributed to the loss of about 80,000 lives last year in America alone come flowing across, whether it is heroin or cocaine or artificial opioids. You name it, it is coming across the border by the same people who are moving the migrants across the border. Again, they are commodity agnostic. They will do anything for a buck, and they care nothing about the migrants at all.

Well, imagine calling 9-1-1 when your home is on fire and watching as they hose down your neighbor's house instead. That is what it feels like watching the Vice President down in Central America.

For years, the United States has tried to address the crime and corruption in Central America with very limited success. Do they have some modest role in the crisis? Well, yes, but that is hardly where the Vice President's attention should be focused right now. Particularly, she should be focused—and the President focused—on working with us on policies that Congress would pass that would mitigate this humanitarian crisis.

Former Senator HARRIS's list of legislative accomplishments and her experience solving complex policy problems is not particularly deep. But rather than be critical, I would like to offer a suggestion.

In April, Senator SINEMA—the Senator from Arizona—and I introduced the Bipartisan Border Solutions Act to address this unfettered flow of migration. She is concerned about Arizona; I am concerned about Texas. But the truth is, I am concerned about America writ large.

We have been proud to work in a bicameral way, too, with two of our friends on the other side of the Capitol: Congressman HENRY CUELLAR, a Democrat from Laredo, TX; and TONY GONZALES, from the 23rd congressional district. The four of us live in and represent border States and districts. We have spent time—a lot of time—listening and learning from the men and women who are committed to safeguarding our border and those who care for the migrants and those who live in these border communities.

There are a lot of people out there who will talk about what is happening at the border who have never actually been there, so how in the world would they possibly know? They inaccurately characterize border communities as unsafe, lawless places. That is not true.